

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTORATE	TOURISM AND LEISURE COMMITTEE	12 MARCH 2020	4
COASTAL SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENTS			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

The report concerns the progress to date with the Capital Coastal signage project. The report recommends the adoption of the Coastal Signage Strategy which was based on the Councils Coastal Strategy 2015-2032, creates 5 distinct phases to enable the project to be delivered, seeks to appoint Links Signs and Graphics to undertake Phase 1 to Consolidation/ rationalisation of information and enforcement signage and to draw down the funding to enable the remaining 4 Phases to be worked up and delivered.

Finally, two additional schemes are proposed to be included as part of the project, Borough Entrance Signs and Town Centre digital signs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To adopt the Councils signage strategy.
2. Approve the drawdown of the £60,000 capital expenditure for the 'Coastal Signage Improvements' scheme within the approved capital programme for 2020/21 including the authorisation of the procurement path and allocation as detailed in Tables 1 & 2 of the report which is fully compliant with the Council's contract procedure rules.
3. To note the requirement to revamp the Borough Entrance signs and to include two Town Centre Digital Signs in the overall signage project and these will be subject to future capital bids.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Tourism and Leisure Committee 8th November 2018

Resolved – To support the capital bid for the Coastal Signage Improvements.

Full Council 3 March 2014

RESOLVED – The approval and adoption of the updated Five-Year Capital Programme as set out in Appendix G; Coastal Signage Improvements £60k.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services (Value for Money)	✓
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council (Clean and Green)	✓
Working with all partners (Vibrant Economy)	✓
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live (A Great Place to Live)	✓
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit (A Great Place to Visit)	✓

REPORT

BACKGROUND

1. In November 2018 the Tourism and Leisure Committee approved a capital bid to improve the Coastal signage. The aims of the project were:
 - Adoption of formal Coastal Signage Strategy
 - Remove or repair dilapidated signage and redundant posts
 - Install appropriate new signs incorporating accessibility, promoting area identity, improve directional and interpretation signage and adopt national signage standards and logos, e.g. RNLI coast access, English Coastal Path, National Cycle Routes, etc.
2. The main objectives of the signage strategy included improved navigation, information and interpretation along the coast as well as safety and security of the users of the area. The proposals considered the individual character of six coastal zones as identified in the Coastal Strategy 2015-2032. The signage strategy is highlighted in Appendix 1 and consists of a visual guide for any signage placed along the Fylde Coast, including wayfinding, interpretation, information safety and legal signage.
3. A signage audit was undertaken to identify signs to remain, remove or replace. This process is currently underway with each service department leading on the removal and replacement of inappropriate and redundant signage for their service area. This process is taking time as safety and legal signage can't be removed without replacement.
4. There were originally several strands to this project including:
 - Improve the visitor experience
 - Adopt national RNLI coastal safety standards
 - Meet statutory obligations regarding water quality
 - Highlight the Environmental and historical importance of the area
 - Enforce local restrictions
 - Contribute towards the Council's Coastal Strategy 2015-2032
5. At the Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting on 4 November 2019, the committee considered a report on an open space improvement scheme. The scheme was broken down into three elements and related to the Fylde Sand Dunes. It included dune reprofiling and stabilisation works; design and installation of dune signage; and the design and installation of attractive dune entrance features. Since the meeting, the Parks and Coastal Services team and partners have made excellent progress. The Lancashire Wildlife Trust were successful in their application to the Lancashire Environment Fund (LEF) for £27,000 towards the overall cost of the scheme, with the remaining £25,000 being funded by Section 106 monies. The planning application 19/0829 for the dune reprofiling and stabilisation works was approved by the Planning Committee. Dune reprofiling and stabilisation works commence in March for the duration of 6 weeks. Tender documentation for the new dune entrance features, waymarking and signage is currently being completed and will be put on the Chest procurement portal in March. Evaluation of the tenders will then follow and the works to install the new entrance features and signage will commence from Autumn of this year.

SCHEME DETAIL

6. There are several different projects to consider including the improvement of the Sand Dunes signage, the Fairhaven to Church Scar Sea Defence project, and the Fairhaven Lake redevelopment scheme, all of which have signage provisions. This report concentrates on what is being labelled as Phase 1, the improvement and rebranding of information and enforcement signage as well as the reduction of unnecessary or outdated signage. Some examples of these signs can be found at Appendix 2.
7. Following a further audit of the signage within these areas, it has been concluded that 70 new signs need to be installed at a cost of £4,149 can be found at Appendix 3
8. It is proposed to introduce digital beach signage in two pilot areas. The first being at the beach entrance to the South side of the pier, and the second near to the windmill in Lytham. Digital beach signage presents the opportunity to communicate important messages to the general public immediately, whether this be a Tourism Information message about events, or a warning message relating to the beach such as high tides, water quality and the discovery of palm oil. Some examples of the types of messages that could be displayed can be found at Appendix 4. The sign would act as “millions of signs in-one” using proactive corporate communication messages.
9. Fylde Council would be leading the way in regard to digital beach signs, being the first Council to introduce these in the UK. An example of a digital beach sign provided by Auckland Council in New Zealand can be found at Appendix 5. The cost of the 2 totem digital signs, which will be provided by the same company as the totems scheduled to be installed in St Anne’s and Lytham centres, with reinforced material to further protect from the beach elements is £18,595 and the full costings can be found at Appendix 4. A total budget of £25,000 has been allowed to include supply and installation. The signs will be updated with content remotely, and messages can be changed instantly should any emergency messages need to be updated.

FUTURE PHASES

10. The coordination of signage is complex, the original capital bid covered the signage on the coast however there have been other projects such as Borough Entrance signs and digital signage that are being developed that require coordinating. The proposal is to combine these projects with the original coastal signage and deliver them as several phases.
11. Beach Safety Signage. The lack of effective, consistent signs and safety flags on UK beaches has been identified over the past few years as a major contributing factor to many deaths and serious injuries nationally. Signs and flags are important on beaches to tell users about the safety risks, lifeguard services and local information. The signs and flags are not only important to people who are unfamiliar with the beach but also provide important information about the conditions for regular beach users.

The RNLI’s ‘A Guide to Beach Safety Signs, Flags and Symbols’ is used to determine what sort of beach there is along any particular stretch (rural, resort, lifeguarded, non-lifeguarded, etc.), and advises on undertaking a specific beach risk assessment for the beaches in question. It is from these exercises the warning symbols, types of sign, location of signs are then determined through the guide. The recommended signage also has provision for extra space for other useful notices, such as dog walking restrictions, etc. The latest coastal scheme (Fairhaven to Lytham) has used this best practice guide to determine the safety signage along that frontage (see appendix 6 below).

12. Waymarking/Directional signs are very important to help people get the most out of the footpaths along the Fylde coast. Such signs are especially important for people who are unfamiliar with the area or who are less confident in their ability to navigate safely. As such, they can play a significant role in helping visitors enjoy the Fylde coast and in helping encourage people to become more active. Fingerposts, which direct people along a route and contain information about the direction of the route, the end destination and the distance to it. Way markers, which help to guide people along a route and give them reassurance that they are on the right path. Orientation panels, which promote the site and inform users of what paths are in the area, where they go and local attractions along the route (typically using a map). Orientation panels can also serve to provide a welcome to visitors and contribute to their ‘sense of place’ as part of an overall destination brand.

13. Heritage and Interpretation signage is signage that helps to create a narrative that acts to generate a positive user experience. With interpretive signage, the idea is to try and create a positive and long-lasting impression for visitors i.e. to create a good user experience. Interpretive signage is about educating users and allow users to interpret the experience in their own way. The Heritage Lottery Project for Fairhaven Lake will provide a fully interactive visitor experience through its Heritage and Interpretive signage. This project will cover specifically Lytham Green and the Island site.
14. Car parks, and their associated signage, contribute a significant proportion of all signs along the Fylde Coast. There are 8 car parks on sea-front locations each with entrance signs, tariff boards, disabled/other designated bays and numerous repeater signs to advise customers to pay and display and to advise blue badge holders that they must pay if they are not parked within a designated disabled bay. Most of the signs have been in place at least 15 years and, although still serviceable, are looking shabby. Ice warning signs are now also added over the winter months. When the Town Hall car park was renovated in early 2019 the opportunity was taken to consolidate repeater signs and to redesign the tariff board. From April new consolidated repeater signs will replace current signs. New tariff boards for those car parks where tariffs have been changed (North Beach, St Anne's Swimming Pool and Fairhaven Road) will be installed on 1st April with further new tariff boards produced for Stanner Bank and Wood St Car Parks once the works that are currently taking place are completed. Other tariff boards and signs will follow over the coming 12 months. Costs for these signs will come from car park revenue funding.
15. Borough Entrance signage. Following discussions with members, an audit is currently underway of the range of entrance signage that welcomes visitors to the Borough of Fylde. At present there is a wide range of signs styles, sizes and messages. It is planned, once a full assessment has taken place, for Officers to draw up options for fresh and coordinated signage with a consistent approach.
16. Town Centre Digital signage. A capital scheme to provide two new digital units are planned to provide tourist information – one in Lytham (Clifton Square) and one in the centre of St Anne's (adjacent to one of the domes). These robust units, which would be designed to fit in with existing street furniture colours, will have 4G connectivity and be able to be accessed remotely to provide timely and relevant information, plus potentially carry advertising. The proposal for these two units is within the draft Council budget for 2020 / 2021. If these are approved at Budget Council, officers will progress these. There is also an electronic unit for use in the mobile Tourist Information unit which is typically used April to September.
17. The English Coastal Path. The regional Lancashire coastal way has now been subsumed into the National England Coast Path. Natural England are developing a long-distance National Trail which will follow the coastline of England. When complete, it will be 2,795 miles (4,500 kilometres) in length. The England Coast Path has been possible because of the introduction of a UK law, the Right of Coastal Access, giving people for the first time the right of access around all England's open coast, both along the England Coast Path and, usually, over the associated 'coastal margin'.

PROCUREMENT

18. The corporate support team have been working with Links signs and graphics on a phase 1 scheme, the improvement and rebranding of information and enforcement signage. The cost of this is £4149 for 70 new signs. This has been checked against other signage costs and represents value for money. Therefore, it is recommended to directly award this work to Links signs and graphics.
19. The procurement route for the remaining four phases is mapped out in Table 1 below-

Table 1 - Procurement Path

Description	Procurement Path	Value
Phase 1 Consolidation/ rationalisation of information and enforcement signage	Procured under the Council's small contract procedure rules where the value is less than £10,000	£4,149
Phase 2 Digital Beach Signs	Procured under the Councils medium contract procedure rules where the value is between £10,000 and £100,000 where 3	£25,000

	quotations are required	
Phase 3 Beach Safety Signs	Procured under the Councils medium contract procedure rules where the value is between £10,000 and £100,000 where 3 quotations are required	£15,000
Phase 4 Waymarking/Directional signs	Procured under the Council's small contract procedure rules where the value is less than £10,000	£5,000
Phase 5 Heritage and interpretation	Procured under the Councils medium contract procedure rules where the value is between £10,000 and £100,000 where 3 quotations are required	£10,851
Total		£60,000

FINANCE

20. The budget for the coastal signage improvements which is in the approved capital programme for 2020/21 is included in Table 2 below, with details the number of phases with a cost allocation to each.

Table 2 - Capital Budget Allocation

Description	Cost estimate	Status	Funding Source
Phase 1 Consolidation/rationalisation of information and enforcement signage	£4,149	In progress	Capital Coastal Signage improvement budget
Phase 2 Digital Beach Signs	£25,000	In progress	Capital Coastal Signage improvement budget
Phase 3 Beach Safety Signage	£15,000	Detail to be worked up by Technical Services team	Capital Coastal Signage improvement budget
Phase 4 Waymarking/Directional signs	£5,000	To be worked up by the Coastal Ranger Service and the Regeneration team	Capital Coastal Signage improvement budget
Phase 5 Heritage and interpretation	£10,851	To be worked up	Capital Coastal Signage improvement budget
Total	£60,000		

21. The signage elements which weren't part of the original capital bid or have been funded from other sources are identified below in Table 3. Additionally, there are a number of projects for example the Borough Entrance Signs and Town Centre Digital signs which will be the subject of future capital bids.

Table 3 - Additional projects

Description	Cost Estimate	Status	Funding Source
Fylde Sand dune project	£21,561	In progress	£27,000 Lancashire Environment Fund £25,000 Section 106 funding
Car Parking	Detail currently being worked up by the Technical Services Team	In progress.	Car Park Revenue Budget
Borough Entrance Signs	Cost estimate to be developed	Potential future capital bid	Capital
Town Centre Digital Signs	£30,000	Capital bid approved March 2020	Capital
English Coastal Path	NA	Natural England are implementing this project	Natural England

CONCLUSION

22. In conclusion the provision and coordination of signage in the Borough is very complex and time-consuming. With the vast array of signs required and the move towards more modern digital signage it is important the Council adopts a uniform consistent approach. The report aims to pull all the strands together to deliver a professional approach in a phased way to improve the Boroughs signage provision. Professional quality Signage provision is expensive, additional funding has been secured however future additional funding may be required.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	Approval of the drawdown of the £60,000 capital expenditure for 'Coastal Signage Improvements' within the approved capital programme in 2020/21 as detailed within the report.
Legal	No implications arising from this report.
Community Safety	No implications arising from this report.
Human Rights and Equalities	No implications arising from this report.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	No implications arising from this report.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	No implications arising from this report.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Item 5 - Scheme 5 - Coastal Signage Improvements	8 th November 2018	Link
Coastal Strategy 2015 - 2032	2015	Link

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:

Appendix 1 - Coastal Signage Strategy

Appendix 2 – Examples of damaged/outdates signs to be replaced

Appendix 3 – Links Signs and Graphics Quote

Appendix 4 – Examples of display messages for digital sign

Appendix 5 – Example of Auckland Council digital beach sign

Appendix 6 – Fairhaven Coastal Safety Signs